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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/697,989	10/31/2003	Toshio Tetsuka	SN-US035137	8968
22919	7590	12/04/2007	EXAMINER	
GLOBAL IP COUNSELORS, LLP 1233 20TH STREET, NW, SUITE 700 WASHINGTON, DC 20036-2680				BOES, TERENCE
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
		3682		
MAIL DATE		DELIVERY MODE		
		12/04/2007		
		PAPER		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/697,989	TETSUKA, TOSHIO	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Terence Boes	3682	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-14 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 4,5,7,10-12 and 14 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-3,6,8,9 and 13 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Request for Continued Examination

1. The request filed on 11/01/2007 for a Continued Examination (RCE) is accepted and a continued prosecution application has been established. An action on the RCE follows.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claims 1-3, 3, 8, 9, and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

The term "abrupt" in claim 1, line 14 is a relative term which renders the claim indefinite. The term "abrupt" is not defined by the claim, the specification does not provide a standard for ascertaining the requisite degree, and one of ordinary skill in the art would not be reasonably apprised of the scope of the invention.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1-3, 6, 8, 9 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ueng USP 5957002 in view of Rivin USP 4184380.

Re claims 1-9 Ueng discloses a(n):

- Operator actuating member (10)
- Positioning mechanism coupled to the operator actuating member (see figure 1) including:
 - First member and second members (43,20)
- Ratchet member (43)
- Pawl member (20)
- Winding element (52)

Ueng does not disclose an elastomeric buffering member that is a coating.

Rivin teaches elastomeric buffering members (18, C3/L21) that are coatings for the purpose of reducing noise, vibration and wear and reduced sensitivity to distortions in gear alignment (Column 2, lines 35-37).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the setup of Ueng and employ a buffering element that is a coating, as taught by Rivin, for the purpose of reducing noise, vibration and wear and reduced sensitivity to distortions in gear alignment.

Response to Arguments

4. Applicant's arguments filed 10/19/2007 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant argues "...the coatings in the Rivin patent cannot be thick enough or resilient enough to cushion impacts between impacting surfaces."

In response, the coating (18) of Riven is both resilient and thick enough to cushion impacts between impacting surfaces. The coating of Riven is a "resilient coating" (C3/L21). Furthermore Riven discloses, "Also since elastic deformation of the resilient coating operates to take up external friction, heat and noise generation is greatly reduced." Furthermore, the purpose of applicant's coating (55) is to "...reduce and/or eliminate abrupt contact between various members, and which reduces audible noise caused by such contact". Because both applicant's and Riven's coatings are resilient and reduce noise the combination of references is valid.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Terence Boes whose telephone number is (571) 272-4898. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Richard Ridley can be reached on (571) 272-6917. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

TB
TB
11/29/07



RICHARD RIDLEY
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER